

01  
Amended B1  
(amended) A stent as set forth in claim 13 [1] wherein the coating [(6, 18)] is irregular in respect of its thickness.

3. (amended) A stent as set forth in claim 2 wherein the coating [(6, 18)] is completely missing at at least one location on the surface [(4)] of the stent.

2/B2  
4. (amended) A stent as set forth in claim 3 wherein the coating [(6, 18)] is interrupted in a grid-like pattern.

5. (amended) A stent as set forth in claim 13 [one of the preceding claims] wherein the coating [(6, 18)] is provided in the form of coating islands [(18)] on the surface of the stent.

6. (amended) A stent as set forth in claim 5 wherein the coating islands [(18)] are of a substantially round configuration.

7. (amended) A stent as set forth in claim 5 [one of claims 5 and 6] wherein the coating islands [(18)] are all of substantially the same size.

5/B3  
8. (amended) A stent as set forth in claim 5 [one of claims 5 through 7] wherein the coating islands [(18)] in regions [(12, 14, 16)] involving a greater degree of local stretching of the stent surface [(4)] upon stretching of the stent are arranged at a greater mutual spacing than in regions [(8, 10)] involving a lesser degree of local stretching of the stent surface.

9. (amended) A stent as set forth in claim 5 [one of claims 5, 6 and 8] wherein the coating islands [(18)] in regions [(12, 14, 16)] involving a greater degree of local stretching of the stent surface [(4)] upon stretching of the stent are smaller than in regions [(8, 10)] involving a lesser degree of local stretching of the stent surface.

10. (amended) A stent as set forth in claim 9 wherein the mutual spacings of the coating islands [(18)] are substantially the same everywhere.
11. (amended) A stent as set forth in claim 13 [one of the preceding claims] wherein the coating [(6, 18)] comprises biocompatible material.
12. (amended) A stent as set forth in claim 13 [one of the preceding claims] wherein the coating [contains] comprises at least one member selected from a group consisting of: amorphous silicon carbide [(a-SiC)], hydrogenated amorphous silicon carbide [(a-SiC:H)] and [and/or] gold.


Please insert the following new claims:

13. (new) A stent having a surface with a coating, characterised in that the coating is formed irregularly on the surface.
14. (new) A stent as set forth in claim 6 wherein the coating islands are all of substantially the same size.
15. (new) A stent as set forth in claim 6 wherein the coating islands in regions involving a greater degree of local stretching of the stent surface upon stretching of the stent are arranged at a greater mutual spacing than in regions involving a lesser degree of local stretching of the stent surface.
16. (new) A stent as set forth in claim 6 wherein the coating islands in regions involving a greater degree of local stretching of the stent surface upon stretching of the stent are smaller than in regions involving a lesser degree of local stretching of the stent surface.

#### REMARKS

The above claims have been amended to more closely correspond them to United States claiming practice, namely, by removing multiple dependencies, especially improper multiple

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